Syra, Greece, Sept. 14th. 1835.

To the members of the F. M. Com.
Theol. Sem. Princeton, N. J.
Dear Brethren,

Being providentially detained for a few days in this place, I take this opportunity of replying to your communication of April 15th, addressed me by your Asst. Sec. Mr. Johnson, & recd. (or about) on the 2d. instant.

You needed no apology for addressing me. — I thank you for the items of intelligence contained in your communication, and shall be happy if in reply I can say any thing which may aid or encourage you in your efforts to advance the common cause.

Greece, as you are aware, has been for several years the scene of excitements, changes, & uncertainties. During the Revolution the schemes of one political or military leader after another successively aroused the hopes or excited the fears of the people; and almost all ended in mischief to the people and disappointment to the demagogues who projected them. The arrival of Capo d'Istria was hailed as the dawn of a brighter day. The hopes of all parties, even of his enemies were at first unquestionably high. But he failed of accomplishing the good which was anticipated from him. It was impossible for one who had all his days been the tool of a despot to enter into the spirit of republican institutions.

You are acquainted with the "story of his untimely end."— After fifteen months of "confusion & every evil work," the arrival of King Otho created a sensation greater probably than had been produced by any preceding event. The people were all confidence & hope. The commencement of the new Govt. was not however such as to satisfy the popular expectations. Indeed it was impossible that any man or body of men _should_ satisfy them. They were not of a nature or measure to be satisfied except by miracle. The views too of the govt. do not seem to be in accordance with the wishes of the people in regard to the constitution of the country. One hope after another has been cut off, and as yet the people see nothing in their government which even promises anything else than an absolute monarchy.

But it is not my object to go into the political history of Greece. I mention these facts generally, only to introduce what I have to say respecting the moral & intellectual progress & present state of this people. It was natural that when waking to the life of political liberty they should also exhibit a moral & intellectual awaking. Accordingly a _spirit of inquiry_ on moral and intellectual subjects was during the revolution a prominent characteristic of the Greeks, and one which led our brethren then here to remark the applicability to _them_ of St. Paul's description of their ancestors "The Greeks seek after wisdom".

But it is also natural that the repeated disappointment of their schemes & anticipations, particularly the failure of obtaining those grand objects for which the revolution was commenced, and the unlooked for increase of their burdens should tend to sink them again into a state of discouragement and apathy. — This to a considerable extent has been the sad result. The eye of the Christian philanthropist is pained as he begins to notice such a result, and especially when he contemplates the probability of a still greater deterioration. — We may hope that the means of religious & moral & intellectual renovation will continue to operate, but not so rapidly as we had expected.

Little has yet been done for the great cause of education in comparison with the wants of the country. With the state of the schools under the superintendence of Missionaries, in this place; at Athens, & at Argos, you will doubtless be acquainted by means of the missionary journals. Besides these, schools for boys exist in nearly all the provinces, supported (feebly) by Government. Only one female school has been established by Gov.t and that through the agency of Dr. Korck, who you are probably aware holds the post of Genl. Superint.t of common schools. He is intending as soon as practicable to commence other female schools, and for these he must obtain teachers from the miss.y schools.

The condition of the existing schools accords with the apathy of the public mind to which I have alluded above. At the same time there are some favorable indications. Mr. King and I recently applied for & obtained the requisite license for the sale & distribution of books throughout the country. This permission was sought & denied when the law restricting the press & book-selling was first published: — The number of N. Testaments distributed the present year (i.e. within a year) is nearly

Seven thousand, greater than the number dist.t in any preceding year. These books have been put in circulation by all the missionaries, chiefly by Mr. Leeves & Mr King. Many other useful books have been put into circulation, and though, on acc.t of the political condition of the country, there seems to be less interest in the perusal of them than formerly, yet we have reason to hope that they will be the means of extensive good. — On the other hand, the Bishops are becoming more decided in their opposition & this will doubtless have considerable influence on the people at large. The "Gospel Trumpet", the only religious newspaper in the country is decidedly & strongly inimical & uses all its efforts to work upon the prejudices of the people. — But our work is not ours, but His that sent us. Let us trust in Him & do our duty. — Above all, let our walk be close with Him, that so we may save ourselves & them that hear us. — I shall be happy to hear from you, & to answer your communications. — Farewell. —

Your brother in the gospel, Elias Riggs.

Received January 1836. Answered Dec 25th 18[illegible]

Cor.s Secretary of the For. Miss. Com.
of the Soc. of Inq. in the Theol. Sem.
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NEW-YORK SHIP DEC 15

Received & forwarded by your ms. obt. Serv.ts —
pr. Jacob Van Lennep & Co
Smyrna 2. Octr. 1835.